



## **Government High School Assessment Frequently Asked Questions**

**August 2012**

### **1. Why has the Government High School Assessment (HSA) been reinstated?**

During the 2012 General Assembly session, legislation was introduced to reinstate the Government HSA to support the teaching and engagement of students in the area of government and civics. Both the House and the Senate unanimously passed their respective bills and on May 22, 2012, Governor Martin O'Malley signed Senate Bill 293 and House Bill 1227 into Maryland law (Chapters 476 and 477) resulting in the reinstatement of the Government HSA. The Governor placed funds in the FY13 budget for the Government HSA.

### **2. When will the administration of the Government HSA begin?**

Beginning with the 2012-2013 school year, all students enrolled in the Government course will take the Government HSA. The first administration of the test will occur in January 2013.

### **3. When will the test first be administered to meet a high school graduation requirement?**

On April 24, 2012, the State Board approved the reinstatement of the Government HSA as a graduation requirement. The entering 9<sup>th</sup> graders in the 2013-2014 school year will be required to pass or obtain a combined score of 1602 on the four high school assessments, algebra/data analysis, English, biology, and government to meet the graduation requirement. The first administration of the Government HSA in the 2013-2014 school year will be the January 2014 administration.

### **4. Why is the Government HSA being administered in the 2012-2013 school year if it is not a graduation requirement?**

Administration in the 2012-2013 school year will serve as a formative assessment as teachers and principals gear up for the administration in the 2013-2014 school year, when passing the Government HSA will become a graduation requirement for entering 9<sup>th</sup> graders. This timeline will allow for broad communication to all stakeholders including parents, students, teachers, principals, coordinators of social studies, guidance counselors, superintendents, etc. The timeline will also allow for the necessary change in the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) for the graduation requirement since there was a lapse in the administration.

**5. Will there be changes in COMAR to reflect Government HSA as a graduation requirement for 9<sup>th</sup> graders beginning in 2013-2014?**

Yes. It is anticipated that revisions to COMAR 13.03.03.09 will be proposed to the State Board in August 2012.

**6. If a student is absent for the test in the 2012-2013 school year will he/she need to take a makeup test?**

Yes. Students who are absent during the primary testing window must take the makeup exam during the make-up testing window.

**7. If a student does not achieve a passing score on the test in the 2012-2103 administration, must he/she retake it?**

In school year 2012-2013, students will not be required to retake the exam in order to obtain a passing score.

**8. What individual record of test performance will need to be maintained for the 2012-2013 administration?**

MSDE will provide all LEAs with a data file containing student scores. All scores need to be reported on the individual student record cards.

**9. Are test security requirements the same as for all other HSAs?**

Yes. The Government HSA is a secure test with secure operational items. The security measures currently in place for all HSAs will apply to this exam as well.

**10. What are the testing dates? When will MSDE release the dates to the LEAs? Do these dates coincide with the current testing calendar?**

Dates for testing will coincide with the regular HSA testing calendar. Please see the revised State Testing Calendar for the specific administration windows for government. The revised calendar will be released by the end of July.

**11. Will the Government HSA be offered online?**

Yes, beginning in January 2013 the Government HSA will be offered online as well as the traditional paper and pencil option.

**12. Will the new national social studies standards change the Government Assessment?**

MSDE will re-evaluate the Government Assessment once the State Board has made a decision on the new standards.

**13. Starting with the administration of the Government HSA in 2012-2013 can students use government as part of a combined score?**

The following rules apply:

- Students entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade in the 2012-13 school year or in a prior school year (including students who entered 9<sup>th</sup> grade in 2011-2012, 2010-2011, or 2009-2010) have two options to meet the combined score option.
  - o Students MAY achieve a combined score of 1602 for English, Algebra/Data Analysis, Biology, and Government.
- OR**
- o Students MAY achieve a combined score of 1208 for English, Algebra/Data Analysis, and Biology.
- Students entering 9<sup>th</sup> grade school year 2013-2014 and beyond **MUST** include the Government HSA score to meet a combined score of 1602.

Entering 9 <sup>th</sup> grade in	Combined Score of 1208	Combined Score of 1602
School Year 2012-2013 or BEFORE	MAY achieve a combined score of 1208 for English, Algebra/Data Analysis, and Biology	MAY achieve a combined score of 1602 for English, Algebra/Data Analysis, Biology, and Government
School Year 2013-2014 and beyond	X	<b>MUST</b> achieve a combined score of 1602 for English, Algebra/Data Analysis, Biology, and Government

Entering 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade In ...	Government HSA Needed?
2005-2006	Yes
2006-2007	Yes
2007-2008	Yes
2008-2009	No, but 1602 MAY be used as a combined score option.
2009-2010	No, but 1602 MAY be used as a combined score option.
2010-2011	No, but 1602 <b><u>MAY</u></b> be used as a combined score option.
2011-2012	No, but 1602 <b><u>MAY</u></b> be used as a combined score option.
2012-2013	No, but 1602 <b><u>MAY</u></b> be used as a combined score option.
2013-2014 and beyond	Yes

**14. Will Bridge Projects be available for Government?**

Yes. Bridge Projects will still be an available strategy for students who need to pass Government for graduation.

**15. Will the mdk12.org website be updated to include the Government HSA in the “Assessment” tab?**

Yes. The website is currently being updated and it will be revised to include the Government HSA.

**16. What is the design of the Government HSA?**

In 2012-13 the Government HSA will include only selected response items. In 2013-14, the Government HSA will include constructed response and selected response items.

**17. In 2013-14 will Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) Government students still have the option to substitute a score of 3 or higher on the AP Exam or a 4 or higher on the IB exam for the Government assessment?**

Yes. Students who need the Government HSA as a graduation requirement will still retain the option to substitute an AP score of 3 or higher or a score of 4 or higher on the IB exam for the Government Assessment.

**18. Will there continue to be a MOD assessment?**

Yes, MOD assessments still are an option for high school students eligible for that assessment.